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Body of Slain CIA Man Is R



—Washington Star Photographer Bernie Boston

Marine Lt. Patrick Welch, escorting the body of his slain father, CIA Station Chief Richard Welch, from Athens, Greece, to Washington, is hugged by his mother, Patricia Welch, and his sister, Molly, on arrival at Andrews Air Force Base today. His mother was the first

wife of Welch, who was gunned down in front of his residence on the outskirts of Athens two days before Christmas. The body was brought home aboard a military jet. The funeral is set for Friday in Arlington Cemetery.

By Jeremiah O'Leary
Washington Star Staff Writer

In the half-light of a cold winter dawn, a young Marine officer stood in rigid salute this morning as an honor guard marched in slow-step down the ramp of an Air Force plane bringing home the body of his murdered father, CIA officer Richard Welch.

Patrick T. (Tim) Welch, 23, a newly commissioned second lieutenant, escorted the casket bearing his father from Athens to Andrews Air Force Base aboard an Air Force 141. In this simplest of ceremonies, Lt. Welch stood apart from the group of CIA and State Department officials and family members until the casket was placed in the hearse.

The young officer embraced his mother, Patricia, who was Welch's first wife, and his sister, Molly. Then CIA Director William E. Colby stepped forward to offer his condolences.

STANDING NEARBY were Philip V. Buchen Jr., President Ford's chief counsel; Deputy CIA Director Vernon Walters, Asst. Secretary of State for European Affairs; Arthur Hartman and a small group of

Welch's CIA friends and associates.

CIA and Air Force security men were stationed around the Military Air Transport Service terminal and the tarmac, but there were no incidents.

Kika Welch, widow of the 46-year-old CIA station chief for Greece, who was slain by unknown assassins Dec. 23, remained in Italy to be treated for a stomach ulcer. She is expected to return here with their other son, Nicholas, 20, later this week for the funeral service and burial in Arlington Cemetery.

When the big C141 taxied to a stop in front of the terminal, the tail ramp was lowered and a color guard of Air Force men marched the national colors to the ramp. An honor guard of eight Air Force men marched to the plane and escorted the flag-draped coffin. Lt. Welch saluted as the coffin was placed in a hearse.

BEFORE THE plane landed, friends and associates of Welch spent nearly an hour with his daughter and his first wife in the VIP lounge at Andrews. The first Mrs. Welch is now a resident of England.

Welch, who was killed by three gunmen in front of his Athens home after an Athens newspaper revealed his identity, will be buried in Arlington by presidential order. The body was taken to Joseph W. Gawler's Sons funeral home to await completion of funeral arrangements by his family and his father, retired Col. Patrick Welch.

Colby praised President Ford's action in ordering that the burial be in Arlington. "He died in active service of his country even if he was not a military man," Colby said of Welch. "He has every right to be there with those who have died in battle."

A special memorial service to be held tomorrow at CIA headquarters in Langley, Va.

special benefit of other covert officials of the agency who might not be able to attend public services because they must protect their own identities within the intelligence gathering organization.

THE SERVICE will be held in what is called the "Bubble," a special domed meeting structure beside the main entrance to the headquarters. Only current employees of the agency will be permitted to attend.

Meanwhile, a spokesman for an American magazine which identified Welch before he was slain said more names of U.S. intelligence agents working in Africa and Europe will be published.

Doug Porter, a staff member of the Washington quarterly Counterspy, said the February issue of the once-obscure magazine will list the names of agents now in Angola, France and Sweden.